Section 1: Progress Report on Project Activities

Describe in some detail what you’ve done to date in your project in each of the following areas, A-C. [Note: if you haven’t done any work related to a specific area, simply indicate “NA.”]

A. Transcript-based placement approaches and other work related to placement processes-

Very Little work is currently being done at Clark around placement. There is a committee considering math placement and they have been informed of the Core to College grant work at Clark College as well as the occurring at other colleges.

B. Joint (college/high school) professional learning efforts around the Common Core State Standards and/or Smarter Balanced assessment

Clark College faculty and Evergreen Public School have met for 5 Faculty Inquiry Team meetings as well as a 3 day workshop. The 10 member team have looked as the math practice standards throughout the year. We have looked at what the practices standards look like and sound like in the classroom both in Clark Algebra II classrooms as well as in Evergreen Public Schools. At each of the Faculty Inquiry Team meetings, a teacher welcomed in the rest of the group as observers and followed a Classroom Exchange Protocol. The classes were also video taped so that the team could revisit the classroom experiences to more deeply observe and label the teacher moves that elicited student engagement in the Practice Standards.

In each of the Faculty Inquiry teams we also examined student work form classes. We used a protocol to look for evidence of student learning. This common work together led to faculty requested learning.

We provided the group with resources to deepen their understanding and professional practice around giving students feedback as well as creating and facilitating re-engagement tasks. The Faculty Inquiry Team watched a video from Dylan Wiliam’s website and discussed the issues can challenges around feedback. We engaged in common work together to construct student feedback for examples of student work from our current classes.

We also provided theoretical and practical information about re-engagement tasks. This learning prompted some of the faculty to create and use several re-engagement tasks. This group effort of looking at student work, classroom exchanges, and theoretical learning has lead to a current working theory about College Readiness preparation. The content strands in the CCSS are certainly relevant and important. It is through the teacher facilitation of content learning that students move towards being College ready. Teacher facilitation skills elicit the development of the Practice Standards in students. Our current thinking is that if students regularly engage in the Practice Standards are College Ready.

The work of this year has built trust, common language, and strong professional relationships. The FIT members have shared the impact of the learning this year. They are articulate about wanting to learn more and share their learning. The Clark College Adjunct faculty has mentioned that this opportunity to learn and reflect on practice has impacted their classrooms. Others have wonderings about how the Common Core Standards and the Smarter Balanced assessment items should impact how and what we teach in Clark College’s pre-college math courses.

A fall workshop for the Clark College math faculty is being designed and hoped for to help extend the learning.

C. Collaborative curriculum development in math and/or English (e.g., “bridge” or transition courses for high school seniors).

The Faculty Inquiry Team is just beginning to fully engage in creating curriculum. The team has thought about the need to have curriculum that supports student engagement in the practice standards.

The FIT has also challenged themselves to create curriculum that has multiple entry points, multiple approaches and can be ramped up to create challenge for students who are ready to be challenged.

At the June workshop the FIT members began writing curriculum items with focus and energy. The curriculum currently is being developed focused on the content standards of Quadratics, Functions and Inverses, Logs and Exponential functions.

Some patterns and examples for curriculum have emerged. Many FIT members are working on “Card Sorts”, “Which of the following are Equivalent?”, and “Concept Tests” as well as some other items. FIT members are also providing thoughts on how to use these tools for pre-assessment, re-engagement tasks, formative assessment near the end of a unit.

These items are being placed in an electronic Sand Box. The shared storage space allows member to use, edit, and make comments on the curriculum items. Our intent is to share these items as the year 2 progresses. The curriculum is being stored in PBworks.

D. Other?

Section 2: Significant Challenges and “Thorny Issues”

A. Identify any significant challenges you’ve encountered with respect to implementation as you pursued your project goals and indicate how you’ve attempted to address each challenge.

One challenge was the initial establishment of the local agency agreement. There were more layers of administration at each institution than we anticipated. This delayed the work of FIT teams until January 2013. Though this was a frustrating start, it ended up allowing us to concentrate the FIT meetings in a shorter time frame, and in the end, might have supported the formation of stronger professional relationships.

One ongoing challenge is to bring this work forward and in front of the Clark College faculty. Though we have shared the work in meetings, and with colleagues, the relevance and national nature of this work is still not well understood and present to the faculty. This challenge was anticipated. Year One of the grant was about establishing trust and developing skills as well as understanding of the Practice Standards.

This year the math department has had three chairs of the department. This had made communication difficult. The math department chair position is now established and more stable. This spring leadership change in the Clark College Core to College faculty lead, has offered an excellent opportunity to share the work of this grant.

As a new Core to College leader at Clark College was sought, the project goals, the year one work, and the purpose of the work was made more clear, and shared several times with administration. As a result the work is more visible and there is renewed commitment to the project.

B. Describe at least one “thorny issue” of practice for the project—a complex and ongoing issue for the work you’re doing that is unresolved and you think would have some relevance to other projects and would be worth exploring in more depth at the summer Institute.

One issue that is up for this group is the question about time to create and use these new curriculum tools. Our practice has been furthered by the opportunity to collaborate and share. How do we extend and build in this professional time and opportunity to support our professional growth. We are wondering about ways to share and distribute the work of doing tasks differently.

We are also balancing the need for students to pursue open0ended questions and the need to for students to make explicit connections.

We are also looking at the practice of Attending to Precision with a focus on language use (ie “Just FOIL it” vs “Let’s use the distributive property”). This has lead us to look at what is known about second language development and how that can inform our approach to learning the formal language of mathematics. We think the use of language between teachers and as algebra learning progresses is a key issue

Section 3: Communication & Collaboration

A. What kind of ongoing communication efforts have you utilized to inform faculty and staff in your college and partner districts about the work you’re doing and help them stay current on Common Core and Smarter Balanced implementation efforts?

See above. Communication has happened at Clark through one to one sharing. This practice has been sufficient as we have been work as a team to build trust and better professional understanding of the CCSS. This fall the grant goals center around several techniques to engage faculty.

1)Fall workshop for Clark College math faculty during Fall Focus

2)Survey to measure faculty awareness

3) Pre-and post student work collection in Algebra 2 courses

4) Tenured math faculty team to score collected student work

5) Educational Seminar Series at Clark to focused on learning about the CCSS and the Smarter Balanced Assessment pilot questions. This Educational Seminar was a practice at Clark in the past, we are hoping to engage faculty in planning and implementing these seminars again.

B. What resources, activities or tools (especially web-based ones) would be most useful to you and your team in supporting your communication efforts and helping us foster cross-project collaboration?

The team would like to have a way to easily see the work of other teams. We are curious to see curriculum and implementation ideas. It would be nice to share some of these ideas in person at the summer gathering. We are using a WIKI based tool called PB works. This site has supported our internal sharing. This use has been successful due to the clear role of a Curator of the site. Debra Schneider has been monitoring of the site, organizing the site, has helped the productive use of the online resources.

The team would like to be able to see tools that are helping other teams broaden their understanding of the CCSS. Tools sought are helpful articles to read, videos to watch, classroom videos to watch.

The team has a high need for a visit from the State team to help represent and communicate the relevance of this work.

There are some thought around the use of some regular online meetings for the team across the state.